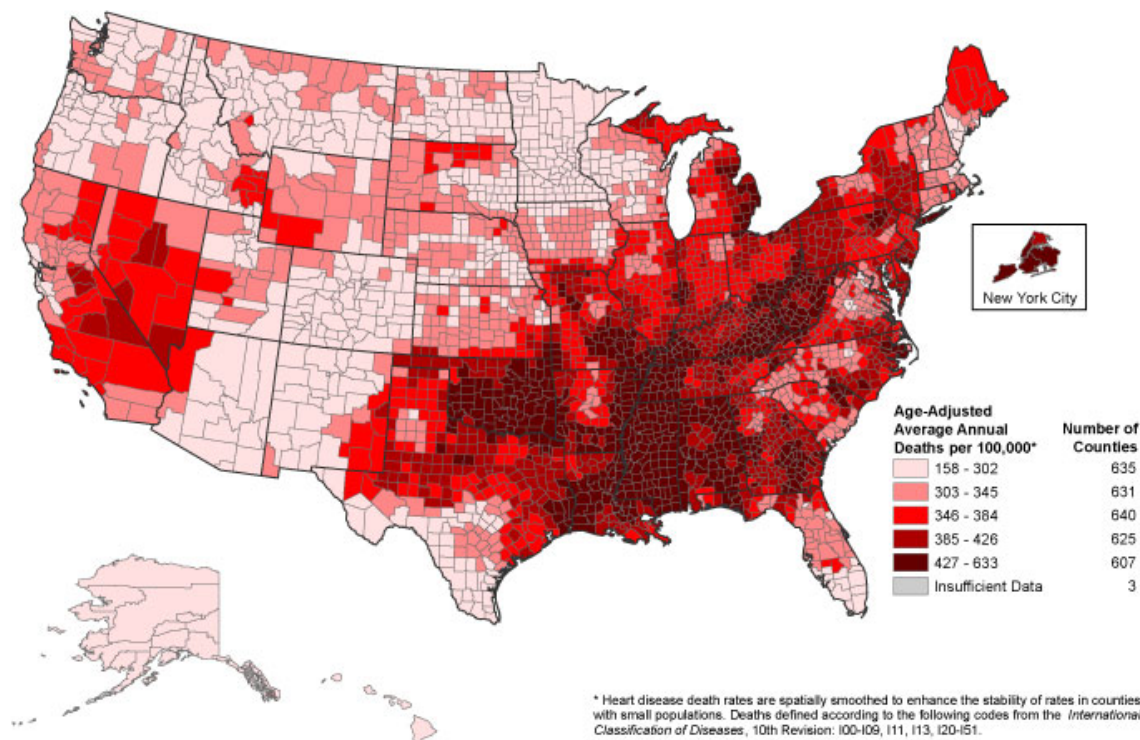


Women and Heart Disease Fact Sheet

Heart Disease Death Rates, 2000-2006 - All Women
Adults Ages 35 Years and Older, by County



Data Source: National Vital Statistics System and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Facts on Women and Heart Disease

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States. In 2006, 315,930 women died from it.¹
- Heart disease killed 26% of the women who died in 2006—more than one in every four.¹
- Although heart disease is sometimes thought of as a "man's disease," around the same number of women and men die each year of heart disease in the United States. Unfortunately, 36% of women did not perceive themselves to be at risk for heart disease in a 2005 survey.²
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women of most racial/ethnic groups in the United States, including African Americans, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Hispanics, and whites. For Asian American women, heart disease is second only to cancer.³
- In 2006, about 6.9% of all white women, 8.8% of black women, and 6.6% of Mexican American women were living with coronary heart disease.⁴

- Almost two-thirds of the women who die suddenly of coronary heart disease have no previous symptoms.⁴ Even if you have no symptoms, you may still be at risk for heart disease.

* For this fact sheet, the term "heart disease" refers to several different types of heart conditions. In the United States, the most common type is coronary artery disease, also known as coronary heart disease.

Risk Factors

Nine out of 10 heart disease patients have at least one risk factor.³ Several medical conditions and lifestyle choices can put women at a higher risk for heart disease, including:

- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Cigarette smoking
- Overweight and obesity
- Poor diet
- Physical inactivity
- Alcohol use

CDC's Public Health Efforts

CDC's Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program

Since 1998, CDC has funded state health departments' efforts to reduce the number of people with heart disease or stroke. Health departments in 41 states and the District of Columbia currently receive funding. The program stresses policy and education to promote heart-healthy and stroke-free living and working conditions. For more information on CDC's National Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, visit

http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/state_program/index.htm.

Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation (WISEWOMAN)

WISEWOMAN is a CDC program that helps women with little or no health insurance reduce their risk for heart disease, stroke, and other chronic diseases. The program assists women ages 40 to 64 in improving their diet, physical activity, and other behaviors. WISEWOMAN also provides cholesterol tests and other screening. CDC funds 21 WISEWOMAN projects in 19 states and two tribal organizations. For more information on the WISEWOMAN program, visit

<http://www.cdc.gov/wisewoman/>.

Women and Heart Disease: An Atlas of Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Mortality

This publication presents national and state maps depicting disparities in county-level heart disease death rates among the five largest U.S. racial and ethnic groups. This information can help government agencies and communities tailor prevention policies and programs to areas with the greatest burden of heart disease. An interactive version of the *Atlas* is available at

<http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/library/maps/>.

A Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke

These recommendations—the result of a far-reaching collaboration—help guide the nation's heart disease and stroke prevention efforts. A national forum of experts committed themselves to

preventing disease rather than treating it and to transforming public health agencies into effective agents of change. CDC convenes the National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and implements the Plan. For more information please see http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/library/action_plan/index.htm.

Go Red for Women

CDC supports National Wear Red for Women day, an event organized by the American Heart Association to raise awareness of the importance of heart health among women.

For More Information

For more information on women and heart disease, visit the following Web sites—

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [American Heart Association](#)*
- [National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute](#)

References

1. Heron MP, Hoyert DL, Murphy SL, Xu JQ, Kochanek KD, Tejada-Vera B. [Deaths: Final data for 2006](#). [PDF–633K] National Vital Statistics Reports; Vol. 57 No. 14. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2009.
2. Mosca L, Mochari H, Christian AH, Berra K, Taubert K, Mills T, Burdick KA, Simpson SL. [National study of women's awareness, preventive action, and barriers to cardiovascular health](#).* *Circulation*.2006;113:525–534.
3. Heron MP. [Deaths: Leading causes for 2004](#). [PDF–426K] National Vital Statistics Reports; Vol. 56 No. 5. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2007.
4. Lloyd-Jones D, Adams RJ, Brown TM, et al. [Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2010 Update. A Report from the American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee](#).* *Circulation*. 2010;121:e1–e170.

*Links to non–Federal organizations are provided solely as a service to our users. Links do not constitute an endorsement of any organization by CDC or the Federal Government, and none should be inferred. The CDC is not responsible for the content of the individual organization Web pages found at this link.